

Menopause Works Here™

Employer Best Practices Session

sponsored by  Sun Life



Menopause Foundation
of Canada

The Menopause Foundation of Canada (MFC) held a first-of-its-kind virtual panel discussion on October 7, 2025, bringing together HR leaders from some of Canada's best-known companies to discuss the impact of menopause in the workplace.

Women over 40 — the prime age for perimenopause and menopause — make up one-quarter of the Canadian workforce, creating a critical need and powerful opportunity for employers to foster menopause-inclusive workplaces. This discussion explored emerging best practices, where work still needs to be done, and how Canadian employers can better support their employees through this stage of life.

Moderator and Panelists

Moderator: Melissa Grelo

Journalist, TV personality, menopause healthcare advocate, and host of the *Aging Powerfully with Melissa Grelo* podcast

Panelists

Marie-Chantal Côté

Senior Vice-President, Sun Life Health

Tanja Fratangeli

Head of People and Culture, IKEA Canada

Sarika Gundu

Head, Canadian Benefits and Enterprise Recognition, BMO

Janet Ko

President and Co-Founder, Menopause Foundation of Canada

Lisa Rosen

Director, Total Rewards, PwC Canada



Key takeaways

Unmanaged menopause symptoms cost the Canadian economy an estimated \$3.5 billion every year due to missed days of work, reduced productivity, and women losing income during their peak earning years. So how can Canadian employers better support their employees through this life stage?

Support dialogue, education and awareness. This helps normalize conversations, removes stigma and fear of discrimination, and gives employees and managers the confidence to discuss menopause in the workplace. Where possible, having senior leaders share their own stories is a powerful way to support and encourage dialogue.



Real-world insight: At IKEA Canada, the launch of new menopause guidelines and manager/employee guides included a senior leader sharing her personal menopause story, a powerful demonstration that open dialogue about menopause is welcome.

Secure leadership buy-in. Visible sponsorship from executives ensures that change happens quickly and signals to employees that the company values women in the prime of their working lives.



Real-world insight: When PwC Canada launched a comprehensive menopause strategy, it had strong support from its executive team from the outset, including the CEO and COO, ensuring the strategy quickly gained momentum and created impact in the workplace.

Rethink policies and benefits with a new lens. Reviewing existing benefits and supports through a menopause-inclusive lens can deliver meaningful improvements, often at little or no additional cost.



Real-world insight: BMO launched its inaugural Women's Health Strategy, offering educational resources, adding benefit enhancements like pelvic floor physiotherapy, and introducing a new Women's Health Conversation Series to spark dialogue on menopause and other topics.

Provide tools and guidance. Formal resources such as guidelines, playbooks and manager toolkits help embed change across the organization and support both employees and leaders.



Real-world insight: Sun Life has developed a comprehensive [tool kit](#) to support employers in creating formal resources to help increase awareness of women's health issues, while also being a key sponsor of MFC's work in supporting menopause inclusive workplaces.



Create trust and enable flexibility: Empowering managers to help create a high-trust environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their needs is key. Often, simple accommodations, such as flexibility in schedule, more frequent bathroom breaks, or use of AI tools, can have a big impact on employee wellbeing and performance.



Real-world insight: MFC's research has found that simple accommodations can be incredibly meaningful for employees. [MFC's downloadable workplace resources](#), including the Playbook for Employers and the new Manager's Guide, provide helpful guidance.

Looking Ahead

While the speakers agreed that significant progress has been made, there is still more work to be done. Menopause affects women and gender-diverse people, and is shaped by factors such as race, ethnicity and culture. Barriers to care and systemic inequities mean experiences can vary widely, underscoring the need for more research. Engaging men in this work is critical to help create a culture of inclusion and support that benefits employees in all phases of life. Canada has an opportunity to be a global leader in addressing the impact of menopause in the workplace. MFC is dedicated to closing the menopause knowledge gap, improving access to menopause care and treatment and creating menopause inclusive workplaces. Learn more at MenopauseFoundationCanada.ca.

Resources

Research from MFC

- [Menopause and Work in Canada Report](#)
- [The Silence and the Stigma: Menopause in Canada Report](#)

MFC's Free Workplace Resources

- [Menopause Works Here Playbook for Employers and Manager's Guide](#)
- [Making Workplaces Better Checklist](#)
- [Menopause at Work Tool](#)
- [Menopause Basics Backgrounder](#)
- [Menopause Inclusive Resources](#)
- [Tips for Managers and Supervisors](#)

Evidence-Based Sources of Information

[Menopause Foundation of Canada](#)

[Canadian Menopause Society](#)

[Menopause and U](#), from the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

[Menopause Hub](#), from the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada and the Canadian Menopause Society

[The Menopause Society](#)

[Menopause Info](#), from the International Menopause Society